

**James Madison to Thomas S. Hinde, August 17,
1829. Transcription: The Writings of James Madison,
ed. Gaillard Hunt. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons,
1900-1910.**

TO THOMAS S. HINDE. MAD. MSS.

Montpr. Aug. 17 1829.

Dear Sir, —Your letter of July 23 was duly recd. but at a time when I was under an indisposition, remains of which are still upon me. I know not whence the error originated that I was engaged in writing the history of our Country. It is true that some of my correspondences during a prolonged public life, with other manuscripts connected with important public transactions, are on my files, and may contribute materials for a historical pen. But a regular history of our Country, even during its Revolutionary & Independent character, would be a task forbidden by the age alone at which I returned to private life, and requiring lights on various subjects, wch. are gradually to be drawn from sources not yet opened for public use. The friendly tone of your letter has induced me to make these explanatory remarks; which being meant for yourself only, I must request may be so considered.

The authentic facts which it appears you happen to possess relating to the criminal enterprise in the west during the administration of Mr. Jefferson, must merit preservation as belonging to a history of that period; and if no repository more eligible occurs to you, a statement of them may find a place among my political papers. The result of that enterprise is among the auspicious pledges given by the genius of Republican institutions

Library of Congress

& the spirit of a free people, for future triumphs over dangers of every sort that may be encountered in our national career.

I cannot be insensible to the motives which prompted the too partial views you have taken of my public services; and which claim from me the good wishes which I tender you.